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Shaw Friend's Assault Trial Begins Here

A friend of accused assassination conspiracy figure Clay L. Shaw went to trial here today on a charge of assaulting a television camerman March 1.

The defendent, 45-year-old Owen Wright, Apt. 10, 4919 Canal, was charged with simple battery after WVUE-TV newsman Erby Aucoin accused Wright of assaulting him the night Shaw was arrested by District Attorney Jim Garrison.

After testimony by Aucoin and another newsman, Criminal Court Judge Bernard J. Baggert took under advisement a motion for a directed verdict filed by the defense.

NEWSMAN PHIL Johnson of WWL-TV testified that Wright struck Aucoin after he told Aucoin not to take any pictures of him.

Aucoin said that he was sent by his news director to 1313 Dauphine, the residence of Shaw, because it was expected that investigators from the DA's office were going to show up and seize evidence under warrant.

Aucoin testified that a car drove up and stopped, blocking the street, and that the defendant got out and approached a group of newsmen and asked where Shaw was. He said that the man's back was facing him and as soon as Wright turned around he began shooting pictures of the defendant. "He asked me if I was taking his picture," Aucoin said. "And then he struck me on my shoulder. I tore my shirt." Aucoin said that Wright did not tell him not to take his picture. He said that Wright had not given him permission to take his picture, however.

WRIGHT ALSO testified that he told Aucoin not to take his photograph.

Defense attorney Walter Kelly argued that the defendant had a right to protect a forceable invasion of his privacy. The state was given time in which to file opposition to the directed verdict.